STRATEGIES, TACTICS AND TRENDS FOR

Lead Generation Quality

Research Series Conducted in Partnership with Leading Providers of Marketing Technology and Digital Marketing Agency Services.
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Methodology

Ascend2 benchmarks the performance of marketing strategies, tactics and the technology that drives them with a standardized online questionnaire and a proprietary 3-Minute Survey format.

This survey was fielded to a panel of marketing influencers and marketing research subscribers.

Survey respondents

Primary Marketing Channel
- B2B: 35%
- B2C: 48%
- B2B and B2C equally: 17%

Number of Employees
- More than 500: 20%
- 50 to 500: 25%
- Fewer than 50: 55%

Primary role in company
- Owner / Partner / C-Level: 42%
- Vice President / Director / Manager: 36%
- Non-Management Professional: 22%
Lead generation quality is a factor that allows you to identify how likely your prospects are to become your paying customers. The higher the quality of the leads generated, the more likely they are to become your customers.

But how are marketers generating higher quality leads?

To help you answer this question, Ascend2 and our Research Partners fielded the Lead Generation Quality Survey. We thank the 260 marketing influencers who responded to this survey during the week of August 12, 2019.

This Survey Summary Report, titled Strategies, Tactics and Trends for Lead Generation Quality, represents the opinions of all the market segments responding to the survey. Specific market segments from the survey are reported on separately and exclusively by our participating Research Partners.

This research has been produced for your use. Put it to work in your own marketing strategy. Clip the charts and write about them in your blog or post them on social media. Please share this research credited as published.
Primary Strategies

For 60% of marketing influencers surveyed, improving the personalization of marketing efforts is a major strategic focus when aiming to generate higher quality leads. Improving content and content engagement is also a primary strategy for bettering the quality of leads generated for over half (57%) of marketers.

What are the PRIMARY STRATEGIES for generating higher quality leads?

- Improving the personalization of marketing efforts: 60%
- Improving content & content engagement: 57%
- Improving data management tools/platform: 30%
- Improving 3rd party lead sources: 28%
- Improving lead quality metrics used: 28%
- Improving the data cleaning process: 15%
- Improving AI and prediction technology: 11%
Strategic Success

Does improving the quality of leads mean more successful strategic execution? According to nearly all marketers surveyed (95%) who find a lead generation quality strategy to be successful to some extent, the answer is yes. Of those surveyed, 35% report a strategy to be very successful, or best-in-class when compared to competitors.

Which best describes the SUCCESS of a lead generation quality strategy?

- Very successful (best-in-class), 35%
- Somewhat Successful, 60%
- Unsuccessful, 5%
Critical Challenges

While improving content and content engagement is a top primary objective for marketers, as demonstrated in the chart above, it also proves to be a top critical challenge for over half (53%) of marketing influencers when it comes to generating higher quality leads. Improving the personalization of marketing efforts is also a top challenge for 44% of those surveyed.

What are the most CRITICAL CHALLENGES for generating higher quality leads?

- Improving content & content engagement: 53%
- Improving the personalization of marketing efforts: 44%
- Improving 3rd party lead sources: 36%
- Improving data management tools/platform: 36%
- Improving lead quality metrics used: 29%
- Improving the data cleaning process: 20%
- Improving AI and prediction technology: 19%
Strategies Versus Challenges

When implementing a lead generation quality strategy, marketers must consider what their most impactful tactics are versus their most critical challenges to success. When it comes to bettering the quality of leads coming in, improvements in personalization efforts as well as content development prove to be challenging yet important to include.

Comparing primary strategies versus critical challenges.

Primary strategies | Critical challenges
--- | ---
Improving the personalization of marketing efforts | 60% 44%
Improving content & content engagement | 57% 53%
Improving data management tools/platform | 30% 36%
Improving 3rd party lead sources | 28% 36%
Improving lead quality metrics used | 28% 29%
Improving the data cleaning process | 15% 20%
Improving AI and prediction technology | 11% 19%
Budget Trends

Dedicated budget is trending up for lead generation quality strategies. The vast majority of marketers report that the time, resources and expenses allocated to improving the quality of leads generated will increase to some extent with nearly one fifth (19%) describing that increase as significant. Only 12% say that total budget will decrease.

Which best describes how the TOTAL BUDGET (time, resources, expenses) is changing to improve the quality of leads generated?

- Total budget will increase significantly: 19%
- Total budget will increase moderately: 69%
- Total budget will decrease moderately: 11%
- Total budget will decrease significantly: 1%
Improving Tactical Effectiveness

When it comes to lead generation, it is becoming apparent that quality is preferred over quantity. Many tactics can bring in a high volume of leads but according to those surveyed, social media marketing and email marketing are the most effective tactics used for improving the quality of leads generated for 59% and 40% of marketers, respectively.

What are the most effective TACTICS USED for improving the quality of leads generated?

- Social media marketing: 59%
- Email marketing: 40%
- Website personalization: 38%
- Content/video marketing: 34%
- Marketing technology/CRM: 33%
- Event/demo registrations: 28%
- SEO/paid search: 23%
Resource Allocation

Improving lead generation quality requires a strategic mix of both in-house resources and outsourced experts according to nearly two thirds of marketing influencers surveyed. About three in ten (28%) say that it is most effective to use in-house employees only, while 10% say they prefer to outsource the tasks completely.

Which best describes the most effective RESOURCES USED to improve the quality of lead generated?

- In-house resources only, 28%
- Outsourced to specialists, 10%
- Combination of outsourced and in-house resources, 62%
Metrics for Quality Measurement

Measuring the success of a lead generation quality strategy is essential for ongoing optimization of efforts. According to marketers surveyed, sales revenue generated (56%), conversion rate to customer (48%) and lead ROI (30%) are top metrics used to best gauge success.

What are the most effective METRICS USED to measure lead generation quality?

- Sales revenue generated: 56%
- Conversion rate to customer: 48%
- Lead ROI: 30%
- Conversion rate from content: 26%
- Pipeline Revenue/Opportunities: 26%
- Sales acceptance rate (SQLs): 22%
- Average lead score/rating: 21%
Quality Measurement Frequency

Optimizing a lead generation quality strategy involves continuously tracking success according to over half (54%) of marketing influencers surveyed. Only 8% report rarely or never measuring lead quality, while 38% measure lead quality metrics occasionally.
Following are just a few of the leading marketing solution providers that have partnered with us on research-based marketing programs.

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